

KBOP Trains Backup Water Systems Operators

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Thanks to one-time grant funding from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) can now offer small water systems financial assistance to train and certify backup operators to maintain their water systems.

To help small systems obtain the services of a second certified operator, KDHE has introduced a new program that pays for the initial training and testing expenses of a back-up public water supply system operator. The Kansas Backup Operator Program (KBOP) provides assistance in the range from \$250 - \$1,200 per operator.



In 1975, the Kansas Legislature established a certification law (KSA 65-4501 through 65-4517) requiring all permitted public water supply systems to be under the supervision of an operator certified by KDHE.

Whether it's a large or small public water supply system, KDHE's program goal is to assist with training certified individuals to operate these systems. This program benefits both large and small water systems meet state law with seamless operations due to staff turnover, illness, vacation or retirements.

Due to the efforts of the Bureau of Water Operator Training and Certification staff, the program has enjoyed success. To date, 220 of those systems have indicated interest in the KBOP program. Since KBOP started in June 2005, 77 backup operators have been enrolled in the program and have either been certified or are receiving training. More individuals are continuing to enroll in the program as public water supply systems continue to identify candidates for certification.

KBOP provides a unique opportunity for KDHE to assist small systems on tight budgets. It can help small systems afford to have a backup certified operator. A second operator will allow systems to provide a higher level of service to customers, and can provide peace of mind that someone with adequate skills and knowledge is protecting the public health when the primary operator is not available.

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